

# Winter Storms

Winter storms can bring extreme cold temperatures, snow, sleet and/or freezing rain and can last for several days. The local weather forecast can usually predict an upcoming winter storm which gives us time to make preparations.

During a winter storm, we can become trapped at home without utilities. Freezing rain can accumulate on trees, power lines and telephone lines, causing power outages for hours or even days. Even small accumulations of snow or ice can be extremely dangerous to motorists and pedestrians. Bridges and overpasses are particularly dangerous because they freeze before other surfaces freeze.



## Know these Weather Terms:

- **Winter Weather Advisory---** Issued for potential accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and sleet, which will cause significant inconvenience and moderately dangerous conditions.
- **Winter Storm Watch ---** Alerts the public to the possibility of a heavy snow, freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 36 hours before the beginning of a winter storm.
- **Winter Storm Warning ---** Issued when a combination of heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet is expected. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued 6 to 24 hours before the event is expected to begin.

## Tips for preparing for a winter storm:

- Check your emergency disaster kit.
- Keep emergency heating equipment and fuel so that you can keep at least one room in your house warm enough to be livable. This might include using a fireplace, wood stove or kerosene heater, but it is important to follow **safety procedures and precautions** for these options.
- Check or replace the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Keep fire extinguishers on hand and make sure your family knows how to use them.
- Buy rock salt to melt ice on walkways.